

SPEAKER MARVEL: The committee amendments are adopted. Before we proceed, in the North balcony from Senator Koch's district it is my privilege to introduce 28 fourth graders from Swanson School in Omaha, Sharon Hesson is the teacher. Will you raise your hands so we can see where you are and say good afternoon to you? Senator Koch, do you want to explain the bill?

SENATOR KOCH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the body, LB 627, contrary to what you might have heard in the past from some correspondence you received, is an effort to modify LB 2 which was a product of a special session in 1978. We have seen LB 2 placed into effect on two occasions. Both of those occasions happened to be subdivisions that are involved in education. The intent of LB 627 then is to modify it in a manner which makes it equitable for all sides of an issue as it relates to procedures of local subdivisions of government and we are certain that this is being a very fair way to attack it. First of all, we strike number 8, the Section that I inferred in the original writing was to cause the costs of the election to accrue to those who initiated the petition. More importantly Section 2 deals with the 15% figure of signatures necessary to initiate a petition. I would say to you that this is consistent with law under Nebraska statute and I will quote to you several sections where this Legislature in the past has seen fit to say that we shall use the term 15% rather than 7% or 5% or some other figure. In section 18-102 we require that a petition for a city initiative is signed by 15% of the registered voters. In section 18-113 we require that a petition for a city referendum be signed by 15% of the registered voters. In section 23-2010 we require that a petition for a recall of a county officer be signed by 25% of the total number of votes cast for the Governor. In addition to this in 5-108 we require that a petition to establish a change of wards or villages or cities and counties takes 25% again of the total of the votes cast for the person receiving the highest number of votes at the last election. In 53-122 we require that a petition for liquor by the drink be signed by 20% of the total votes cast at the last election and in section 19-4201 to 4211 relating to recall of cities and village board members and school board members we require that 25% of the signatures in that area be of the last vote cast. That is the way I justified the 15% figure. I do not believe it is unreasonable and let me remind you that we have many small communities in this state where you have possibly as few as a hundred, two hundred, three hundred eligible voters and if we were to stay with 5% or even 10% or 7% you know as well as I do this is not an unreasonable number of signatures. In fact, it could be